



# ELECTION FOCUS 2008



October 10, 2008

No. 16

**\* 24 Days until Election Day (Nov. 4) \***

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### [THE CANDIDATES](#) - [View PDF \(1.07 MB\)](#)

*E-Journal USA, October 2008*

Every presidential campaign is dramatic and historic, but as the fervor surrounding the 2008 election continues to build, U.S. voters and the rest of the world will want to consider the candidates' personal histories more closely.

#### [Arab Americans Hear They Can Sway Presidential Election](#) – 10/09/2008

Surrogates for Barack Obama and John McCain vied for Arab-American votes at a Virginia candidates forum sponsored by the Arab American Institute. The institute's president, James Zogby, reminds attendees that they could play a decisive role in the outcome of Virginia elections. ...

#### [Political Poll Gives Insight into Western Pennsylvania Voters](#) – 10/09/2008

In the Pennsylvania 4th, voters in the heavily Democratic district seem poised to return a Democratic incumbent to Congress but to support John McCain for president. America.gov talks with a local journalist about possible reasons for the political divide in the heart of America's Rust Belt. ...

#### [Nation's Economy Might Trump Local Issues for Oregon 1st Voters](#) – 10/08/2008

A month before Election Day, the adage that "all politics is local" is being challenged in Oregon's 1st Congressional District as voters focus on the country's economic turmoil. America.gov looks at how political races and related issues in this Pacific Northwest district could be affected. ...

#### [Road to the White House: John McCain](#) – 10/08/2008

In the days remaining until Election Day, Republican John McCain is campaigning across the country, especially eager to win support from voters in key battleground states. ...

#### [Road to the White House: Barack Obama](#) – 10/08/2008

In the days remaining until Election Day, Democrat Barack Obama is campaigning across the country, especially eager to win support from those in key battleground states. ...

#### [Economic Issues Dominate Second Presidential Debate](#) – 10/08/2008

With troubles in global financial markets continuing, John McCain and Barack Obama spend more than half of their second presidential debate discussing economic issues. On foreign policy, the candidates share similar views on United States participation in peacekeeping or peacemaking missions overseas. ...

#### [US Presidential Nominees Market Themselves to Voters](#) – 10/07/2008

Presidential candidates John McCain and Barack Obama use techniques perfected in the advertising world to sell themselves to American voters. YouTube, Flickr, e-mail and other technology has fundamentally changed the way candidates run for political office and allow for broad circulation of political mes ...

#### [Formula Forecasts Presidential Elections Months in Advance](#) – 10/02/2008

Russian scientist Volodia Keilis-Borok and American historian Allan J. Lichtman have developed a formula for predicting the outcome of U.S. presidential elections that suggests polling, advertising, news strategies and debates affect the result less than political pundits and campaign managers believe. ...



Daily updated information is available at a special **U.S. Elections** page at:  
<http://usplitics.america.gov/uspoltics/elections/>

## **Blogs at America.gov CAMPAIGN TRAIL TALK**



<http://blogs.america.gov/campaign/>

Provides running commentary and information on the 2008 elections in the United States. This blog keeps readers up to date on news, rumors and political chatter surrounding thousands of political races. Readers may ask questions about the electoral process, post their comments about the candidates, and generally guide the discussion.

*Michelle Austein keeps you up to date on the candidates, issues and quirky happenings in the 2008 campaign, the third national election cycle she's covered. [Full Biography](#)*

### **From the blog:**

[MTV's Street Team '08: Inside the debate's "spin alley"](#) — 08 October 2008

[Candidates prepare for town hall debate](#) — 07 October 2008

[Polls Suggest Obama gaining momentum](#) — 06 October 2008

[Sarah Palin and Joe Biden face off](#) — 03 October 2008

[Presidential campaign notwithstanding, candidates still work for the U.S. Senate](#)

— 02 October 2008

[McCain, Obama, Biden support U.S.-India nuclear energy pact](#) — 02 October 2008

## **POLLS**

[Electoral College Update:](#) Electoral College: Obama 248 McCain 163

### **National Polls Show Obama Leads Ranging From Three To 11 Points**

Barack Obama continues to hold the lead over John McCain in national tracking polls of the presidential race: The [Gallup](#) daily presidential tracking poll of 2,761 registered voters taken October 6-8 shows Obama leading McCain 52%-41%, the same as the previous day, marking his widest lead in the polling series.

The [Rasmussen Reports](#) automated daily presidential tracking poll for October 9 shows Obama leading McCain 50%-45%, down from 51%-45% on the previous day.

The [Battleground](#) tracking poll of 800 likely voters taken October 6-8 shows Obama leading McCain 48%-45%.

The C-Span/[Zogby](#) daily presidential tracking poll of 1,203 likely voters taken October 6-9 shows Obama leading McCain by 48%-43%.

The Diageo/Hotline daily presidential tracking poll of 852 likely voters taken October 6-8 shows Obama leading McCain 47%-41%.

**State Polling Roundup Obama Up 14 In Pennsylvania.** A [Strategic Vision](#) (R) poll of 1,200 likely Pennsylvania voters taken October 5-7 shows Obama leading McCain 54%-40%.

**Obama Up 10 In Wisconsin** A [Rasmussen Reports](#) automated poll of 700 likely Wisconsin voters taken October 6 shows Obama leading McCain 54%-44%.

**Obama Up 7 In Minnesota** A [Rasmussen Reports](#) automated poll of 500 likely Minnesota voters taken October 7 shows Obama leading McCain 52%-45%.

**McCain Up In 2 Georgia Polls** A [Rasmussen Reports](#) automated poll of 500 likely Georgia voters taken October 7 shows McCain leading Obama 54%-45% in Georgia. A [Strategic Vision](#) (R) poll of 800 likely Georgia voters taken October 5-7 shows McCain leading Obama 50%-43%.

## CAMPAIGN 2008



### [Two Kinds of Change: Comparing the Candidates on Foreign Policy](#) – CATO Institute, October 14, 2008

The next U.S. president will inherit a host of foreign policy challenges, some, though not all of them created by the Bush administration. How the next president will handle those problems will do a great deal to determine the prospects for peace and the future of U.S. national security.

### [THIRTY DAYS AND COUNTING: The Outlook for the 2008 Presidential Election in Early October](#) –

The Center for Politics, October 9, 2008.

Despite a series of dramatic events...a financial crisis on Wall Street, and the first presidential and vice-presidential debates, there has been very little change in the relative standing of the candidates.

[THE BATTLE FOR THE MIDDLE: A Look at the Vice Presidential Debate](#) - The Center for Politics, October 9, 2008. ...Stylistically, the candidates' visual gestures embodied their strengths. Biden's healthy dose of firm hand gestures illustrated the authoritativeness of his points, while Palin's halogen gleams and the occasional wink made her seem likable even during her most hard-hitting jabs at Biden....

### [Voting America, United States Politics, 1840-2008](#) - Digital Scholarship Lab, University of Richmond

Voting America examines the evolution of presidential politics across the span of American history. The project offers a wide spectrum of cinematic visualizations of how Americans voted at the county level, from the beginning of the modern party system to the modern day. See historical developments.

[Election Fundamentals: The Economy, the War and the President](#) – Brookings Institution, September 26, 2008. A troubled economy, an unpopular war and a discredited Republican president would seem to give the Democrats a huge advantage this November. Yet the contest between Senators John McCain and Barack Obama remains remarkably close.

## Websites of the Week:

### [NATIONAL JOURNAL'S AD SPOTLIGHT](http://adspotlight.nationaljournal.com/) - <http://adspotlight.nationaljournal.com/>

Ad Spotlight is NationalJournal.com's blog of political advertising and media strategy, featuring reporting and analysis on the latest campaign advertisements.

### [IN QUOTES - GOOGLE LABS](http://labs.google.com/inquotes/) - <http://labs.google.com/inquotes/>

What did Obama and McCain say about...? Insert your keyword and search recent statements made by the current presidential candidates.

## ARTICLE ALERT

### **PSYCHOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON BARACK OBAMA AND JOHN MCCAIN: ASSESSING THE CONTOURS OF A NEW PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION. Stanley A. Renshon. *Political Science Quarterly*, Fall 2008, pp. 391-433.**

Stanley A. Renshon analyzes the probable psychological baseline contours of a Barack Obama or John McCain presidency. He explores the psychology, worldview, and approach to leadership that are likely to inform and shape the presidency of each candidate in the context of his own developmental history and the psychology of public expectations and concerns. Stanley A. Renshon is professor of political science, Coordinator of the Interdisciplinary Program in the Psychology of Social and Political Behavior at the City University of New York Graduate Center, and a certified psychoanalyst.

[FULL TEXT](#)

### **THE LIST: OBAMA'S 10 WORST IDEAS. Foreign Policy, Posted September 2008 (Web Exclusive)**

Both John McCain and Barack Obama have many smart policy proposals, but not all of them are ready for prime time. This week, FP looks at 10 Obama ideas that should have never seen the light of day:

Renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement, Opposing the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement, Talking Openly About Bombing Pakistan, Sitting Down with Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Promoting Coal-to-Liquid Fuels, Boosting Ethanol Subsidies, Opening the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. [FULL TEXT](#)

**THE LIST: MCCAIN'S 10 WORST IDEAS.** Foreign Policy, Posted September 2008 (Web Exclusive)

Last week, FP roasted Barack Obama's 10 worst ideas. Now, it's John McCain on the hot seat. Creating a League of Democracies, Calling for a Gas-Tax Holiday, Requiring a Three-Fifths Majority to Raise Taxes, Flip-flopping on Immigration, Drilling Our Way Out of the Oil Crisis, Balancing the Budget through Victory in the War on Terror, Making the Bush Tax Cuts Permanent, Supporting Abstinence-Only Education and the Global Gag Rule, Calling for 45 Nuclear Power Plants, Backing Cap-and-Trade Without a 100 Percent Auction. [FULL TEXT](#)

**SYMPOSIUM ON THE NEW VICE PRESIDENCY.** George C. Edwards III, Lawrence R. Jacobs et al,

*Presidential Studies Quarterly*, September 2008, pp. 369-421. The purpose of this symposium is to spotlight and encourage research regarding the vice presidency's electoral and institutional impacts. The year 2008 is a particularly propitious moment to expand this research agenda, for three reasons. First, presidential succession may appear especially relevant. Nearly one out of three vice presidents (14 of 46) has become president. Knowing more about the running mates may be particularly important in 2008 because the Republican nominee, John McCain, is a cancer survivor and would, if elected, be the oldest president sworn in to a first term. A second motivation for expanding the research is that the selection of running mates seems to offer a targeted but still critical electoral resource in 2008. The third and especially important stimulus is the emergence of the vice presidency as a critical institutional base of power and decision making. The media and other political scholars should scrutinize the electoral strengths of the running mates and their suitability to succeed the president. [FULL TEXT](#)

Plus - [Google News](#) as well as [Yahoo News](#) on **Elections** updated continuously

## ELECTION CALENDAR

[October 15, 2008](#) - Final Presidential debate

[November 4, 2008](#) - Election Day

## UPCOMING EVENTS



[America.gov](#) will provide detailed Election Day coverage and interactive activities on its U.S. Elections Web page:

<http://uspolitics.america.gov/uspolitics/elections/index.html>

America.gov will hold a "rolling webchat" which would allow participants to pose questions and view answers throughout Election Day. In conjunction with the Foreign Press Center, America.gov will webcast briefings with political experts throughout the afternoon and evening of Election Day. Speakers will provide analysis of poll results and look forward to what will happen following Election Day. Exact lineup to be announced closer to Election Day.

**Date: November 4 until November 5, 2008.** *Details including the hours of the webchat and speakers to answer questions will be announced shortly.*

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